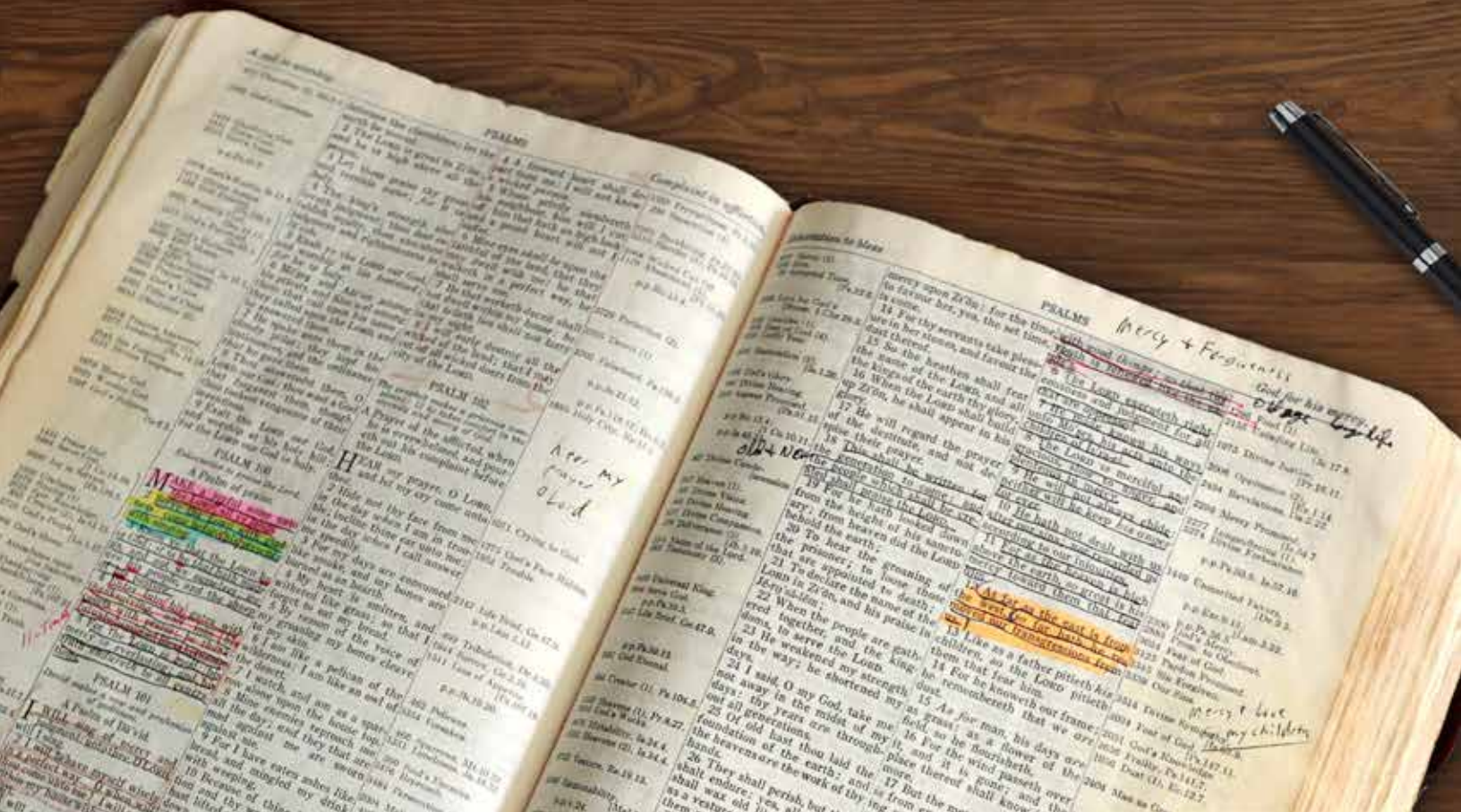


NEW TESTAMENT

A YEAR IN THE BIBLE

DECEMBER



December

The final month! The readings this month are full of familiar verses as well as ones that you might not have previously. Certainly, you will recognize the difference between the passages that have been the source of sermons and the unfamiliar passages; you will probably see why you have not heard some of them on Sunday mornings. All scripture is valuable and important, but there are certain parts of the Bible that are more readily applicable to our lives. As you finish up this Year in the Bible, the hope is that you will be inspired and challenged to continue into the next year, and the next, and so on. Each time that you read through the Bible, you will find that you

gain new insights. You will see how different books relate to each other, and you will be able to make connections between different texts.

A year in the Bible is not nearly long enough - we all need a life in the Bible to better understand God, the love that God has for us, and the love we are called to share with others. 2024 has been a year spent in the Bible, in the word of God. Remember the opening words of the Gospel of John, "In the beginning was the Word..." and as you celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ, the Word of God, make the Word a part of your daily devotional life. Make 2025 another year in the Bible!

Memory Verse

Beloved, let us love one another; for love is of God, and he who loves is born of God and knows God.

(1 John 4:7)

Helpful Hints:

We encourage you to begin your Bible reading time by reciting the month's memory verse and then the daily Bible reading. Reflect on the reading - did it raise questions or confusion; did it inspire you or warm your heart? Then, to live in a spirit of gratitude, write down three things for which you're grateful. Finally, close your devotional time in prayer. While you might not feel the same way each day, the ongoing discipline of having a daily devotional time will have lasting impact on your life and certainly deepen your relationship with God.

Date Scripture	Reflections on the Scripture What surprised or inspired you? What questions do you have?	Three things for which I'm thankful.
December 1 I Corinthians 11-13 Psalms 120		

Letters of Paul

The Apostle Paul led three missionary journeys through what is now modern-day Israel, Syria, Turkey, and Greece. Paul spent significant time in several communities along these journeys. At each stop, he would tell the story of the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus and what that means for the world. Paul and his fellow missionaries would work to establish a church and then move to the next community. The letters of Paul we have in our Bible are letters written to these faith communities to help continue the work of further building the church. The notable exception is the book of Romans. Paul writes the book of Romans before he visits Rome.

Paul's letters are filled with gratitude. He begins each letter by offering thanks to God and to the faithful people who are working on God's behalf. Paul's consistent lesson in his letters is that gratitude is necessary. As you read the letters of Paul, make a note of how often he expresses gratitude and how it shapes his work in building the church.

Date Scripture	Reflections on the Scripture What surprised or inspired you? What questions do you have?	Three things for which I'm thankful.
December 2 I Corinthians 14-16 Psalms 121		
December 3 II Corinthians 1-3 Psalms 122		
December 4 II Corinthians 4-7 Psalms 123		
December 5 II Corinthians 8-11 Psalms 124		
December 6 II Corinthians 12-13 Psalms 125		

Date Scripture	Reflections on the Scripture What surprised or inspired you? What questions do you have?	Three things for which I'm thankful.
December 7 Galatians 1-6 Psalms 126		

Prison Letters of Paul:

The Apostle Paul spent almost six years total under arrest in various ways. He spent over two years under house arrest in Rome. While imprisoned in Rome, Paul continued to share the good news of Jesus. He could still correspond with the churches he started on his missionary journeys. These powerful letters, written while arrested in Rome, are known as the Prison Epistles. These letters are Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon. These letters are filled with encouragement. Paul wants God's people to understand that even under difficult circumstances, there is peace and joy because of the love and grace of Jesus, our Lord. While imprisoned, Paul would write, "Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus." (Philippians 4:6-7)

Date Scripture	Reflections on the Scripture What surprised or inspired you? What questions do you have?	Three things for which I'm thankful.
December 8 Ephesians 1-6 Psalms 127		
December 9 Philippians 1-4 Psalms 128		
December 10 Colossians 1-4 Psalms 129		

Date Scripture	Reflections on the Scripture What surprised or inspired you? What questions do you have?	Three things for which I'm thankful.
December 11 I Thessalonians 1-5 Psalms 130		
December 12 II Thessalonians 1-3 Psalms 131		
December 13 I Timothy 1-6 Psalms 132		
December 14 II Timothy 1-4 Psalms 133		
December 15 Titus 1-3 Philemon Psalms 134		

General Letters of Paul:

The general letters differ from the letters of Paul in that we often do not know who wrote them or to whom they were written. The general letters are Hebrews, James, 1 Peter, 2 Peter, 1 John, 2 John, 3 John, and Jude. These letters are a rich collection of early teachings about Jesus, the nature of the church, and challenging Christians to live loving and faithful lives. The early church wrestled with the challenges of living in an empire often antagonistic to the faith. Not only did they experience persecution by those in power, but they also grappled with what it means to be faithful to God while surrounded by a culture that embraces multiple religions and deities. As we read these letters, let us look for encouragement and teaching to help us faithfully live today.

Date Scripture	Reflections on the Scripture What surprised or inspired you? What questions do you have?	Three things for which I'm thankful.
December 16 Hebrews 1-6 Psalms 135		
December 17 Hebrews 7-10 Psalms 136		
December 18 Hebrews 11-13 Psalms 137		
December 19 James 1-3 Psalms 138		
December 20 James 4-5 Psalms 139		
December 21 I Peter 1-5 Psalms 140		
December 22 II Peter 1-3 Psalms 141		

Date Scripture	Reflections on the Scripture What surprised or inspired you? What questions do you have?	Three things for which I'm thankful.
December 23 I John 1-5 Psalms 142		
December 24 Isaiah 96-7 Matthew 1 Luke 1 Psalms 143		
December 25 Luke 2 Matthew 2 Psalms 144		
December 26 II John III John Jude Psalms 145		

Revelation Synopsis:

The Book of Revelation is one of the more challenging books to read and understand. Written by John while on the Island of Patmos, in this prophetic book, John writes about the vision of Christ he receives, which is ultimately a call for “patience” and “endurance” in the face of persecution. Although much of the letter speaks about events in the future, the heart of the book of Revelation is found in the letters to seven churches in Asia (Chapters 2-3). These letters call us to remain faithful to Christ in the face of persecution. The Book of Revelation is filled with symbols and visions that provoke a wide range of emotions. Still, it is important to remember that the Book of Revelation opens with words of comfort, “Do not be afraid” (1:17), and just as Revelation opens, it also closes with the comforting words of Christ, “And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, ‘Look! God’s dwelling place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God Himself will be with them and be their God. He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.’” (21:3-4) The Book of Revelation is written to bring comfort and encouragement to God’s children, even while we face challenging times.

Date Scripture	Reflections on the Scripture What surprised or inspired you? What questions do you have?	Three things for which I'm thankful.
December 27 Revelation 1-5 Psalms 146		
December 28 Revelation 6-11 Psalms 147		
December 29 Revelation 12-15 Psalms 148		
December 30 Revelation 16-19 Psalms 149		
December 31 Revelation 20-22 Psalms 150		



ONE CHURCH WITH MULTIPLE CAMPUSES

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